

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 00998 111128Z

45

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 19325

INTERESTS IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, MIGHT NOT WANT TO ENTER A COALITION WHICH WOULD PLACE SENI IN THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP. THE CIRCUMSTANCES TODAY ARE NOT QUITE THE SAME AS THOSE WHICH BOOSTED SENI TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S JOB IN 1945. SOME FEEL THAT SENI, AT 69 YEARS, IS TOO OLD TO RUN THE GOVERNMENT. HE IS THE ONLY OTHER MAN ON OUR LIST RUNNING FROM BANGKOK. NO OTHER DEMOCRAT HAS THE NATIONAL STATURE TO REPLACE SENI AS A PRIME MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE. THE DEMOCRATS WILL PROBABLY BE ONLY THE 5TH OR 6TH LARGEST PARTY IN THE NEXT PARLIAMENT.

B) PRASIT KANCHANAWAT - LEADER OF THE SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY. THE SOCIAL NATIONALISTS HAVE A FLAVOR OF PRASIT'S OLD LIBERAL PARTY. PRASIT HAS PREVIOUSLY HELD CABINET LEVEL OFFICE. HE IS 59 YEARS OLD AND MUCH A PART OF THE OLD REGIME. HE WILL RUN FOR HIS TRADITIONAL SEAT IN CHACHOENGSAO PROVINCE. THE SOCIAL NATIONALISTS WILL HAVE LIMITED ELECTORAL SUCCESS, BUT IN A SITUATION WHERE OTHER PARTIES CANNOT GET TOGETHER AND NEED A FEW MORE VOTES TO MAKE A MAJORITY COALITION, PRASIT MIGHT BE RAISED TO THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP.

C) BUNLOET LOETPRICHA - SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY. BUNLOET, LIKE PRAMAN AND SIRI, WAS ASSOCIA-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 00998 111128Z

TED WITH PHAO SIYANON AND THE SERI MANANGKASILA PARTY. HE

ALSO HAS SOME POLITICAL DEALINGS WITH PRASOET RUCHIRAWONG. A MAJOR ORGANIZER OF THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY AND POPULAR WITH FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS, BUNLOET MIGHT BE ONE OF THE DARK HORSES THAT COALITION POLITICS GENERATES. HE IS RUNNING FOR HIS OLD SEAT IN NAKHON NAYOK PROVINCE AND SHOULD WIN EASILY.

D) SAWAT KHAMPRAKOB - DEPUTY LEADER, SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY. SAWAT PROVIDES MUCH OF THE MONEY AND ORGANIZATIONAL TALENT BEHIND THE SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY. HE WAS SHIP FOR THE UTPP IN NORTHERN THAILAND DURING THE LAST PARLIAMENT. ELECTED TO EVERY PARLIAMENT SINCE 1945 FROM NAKHON SAWAN PROVINCE, SAWAT HAS SERVED IN THE CABINETS OF PHIBUNSONGKHRAM AND THANOM KITTIKACHON.

E) BUN CHAROENCHAI - CANDIDATE, SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY IN SAKON NAKHON. BUN HAS HELD CABINET POSITIONS AND HAS BEEN AMBASSADOR TO PARIS AND LISBON. HE WAS DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER UNDER THANAT KHOMAN. BUN REPRESENTS SOME OF THE RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS TO WHOM THE SYSTEM MIGHT TURN. GENERAL KRIT SIWARA HAS MENTIONED BUN IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS AS A GOOD CHOICE FOR PRIME MINISTER. BUN, HOWEVER, HAS A REPUTATION FOR CORRUPTION AND FACES A STIFF ELECTION FIGHT IN SAKON NAKHON. THE SOCIAL AGRARIAN AND SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTIES DID NOT WANT HIM AS THEIR CANDIDATE BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT HIS CHANCES OF WINNING WERE POOR.

F) KRASAE CHANAWONG - LEADER OF THE NEW FORCE PARTY. YOUNG (40 YEARS OLD), PERSONABLE AND ACTIVE, KRASAE WON THE 1973 MAGSAYSAY AWARD. HE PRESENTLY SITS IN THE APPOINTED NLA. WHILE HE PROBABLY WILL SUCCEED IN HIS ELECTORAL BID IN KHON KAEN PROVINCE, HIS PARTY WILL NOT BE MUCH OF AN ELECTORAL SUCCESS. KRASAE'S CHANCES OF BECOMING PRIME MINISTER ARE EXCEEDINGLY SLIM.

G) CHATCHAI CHUNHAWAN - SECRETARY GENERAL, THAI NATION PARTY. AS WITH PRAMAN AND SIRI IN HIS OWN PARTY, THE WINNERS OF THE 1957 COUP EASED CHATCHAI OUT OF THE MAIN-STREAM OF THAI POLITICS. HE SERVED IN DIPLOMATIC EXILE UNTIL HIS RECENT RETURN TO BANGKOK. HE CANDIDACY DEPENDS ON PRAMAN'S OR SIRI' FAILURE TO TAKE THE REINS OF POWER. FLAMBOYANT CHATCHAI DOES NOT HAVE THE BROAD ACCEPTANCE OF PRAMAN OR SIRI, BUT THERE IS A CHANCE THAT THE MACHINATIONS OF COALITION POLITICS MIGHT FINGER HIM.

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PAGE 03 BANGKO 00998 111128Z

C. OUT OF THE RUNNING:

3. SOME PEOPLE EARLIER RUMORED TO BE PRIME MINISTERIAL POSSIBILITIES HAVE ELIMINATED THEMSELVES BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT RUN IN THE COMING ELECTIONS. PRIME AMONG SUCH PEOPLE ARE:

A) DR. PUAU UNGPHAKON. PUAU NOW APPEARS SLATED TO BECOME

THE RECTOR OF THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY. HE HAS ALL ALONG SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT JOIN A POLITICAL PARTY, AND HE DIDN'T.

B) RECENTLY RETIRED AIR CHIEF MARCHAL THAWI CHUNLASAP, WHO MAY STILL HARBOR POLITICAL AMBITIONS, HAS ALSO NOT REGISTERED TO RUN IN THE COMING ELECTIONS, PROBABLY BECAUSE OF PRESSURE FROM GENERAL KRIT SIWARA (BANGKOK A-309).

C) PRASOET RUCHIRAWONG, WHO ACCUMULATED SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL RESOURCES DURING HIS LAST YEARS IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE, HAS ALSO NOT DECLARED A CANDIDACY FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS. IN FACT, PRASOET HAS RECENTLY GIVEN A NUMBER OF NEWSPAPER INTERVIEWS IN WHICH HE SAID HE DOES NOT WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN POLITICS BECAUSE HE THINKS THE COMING COALITION GOVERNMENT WILL BE UNSTABLE AND HE DOESN'T WANT TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH SUCH POLITICAL WEAKNESS.

D) GENERAL KRIT SIWARA IS THE BEHIND THE SCENES BACKER OF THE FOUR REMAKES OF THE UTPP PARTY. HE WILL NOT RUN IN THE COMING ELECTIONS, BUT MAY SEEK ELECTIVE OFFICE ONCE HE RETURNS FROM THE MILITARY IN SEPTEMBER 1975.

E) SANYA THAMMASAK'S DESIRE TO RELINQUISH HIS HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES AS PRIME MINISTER IS WIDELY KNOWN. NEITHER HE NOR HIS DEPUTY, PRAKOP HUTASING, HAVE DECLARED A CANDIDACY FOR THE JANUARY 1975 ELECTIONS.

D. COMMENT:

4. THE FOUR ESTABLISHMENT PARTIES (BANGKOK 18802) MAY HAVE ENOUGH STRENGTH TO FORM THE COALITION GOVERNMENT. THERE IS A POSSIBILITY, HOWEVER, THAT TWO OF THE ESTABLISHMENT PARTIES COULD GET TOGETHER WITH ONE OF THE REFORMIST PARTIES AND FORM A COALITION. THE NON-COALITION MEMBER ESTABLISHMENT PARTIES WOULD STILL BASICALLY SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT. WHATEVER THE SCENARIO, THE POLITICS OF COALITION GOVERNMENT, OF WHICH THERE ARE MANY VARIATIONS, WILL

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 BANGKO 00998 111128Z

DETERMINE THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER OF THAILAND.
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